(c) and (d). Under the liberalised mineral policy, tungston has been removed from the list of minerals reserved for exploitation in the public sector.

(e) and (f). Chemical investigations for tungston are being undertaken in various laboratories for determining future exploitation.

Non-functioning of Gram Panchayat Telephones in Gujarat

3316. SHRI CHHITUBHAI GAMIT : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have received any complaints of non-functioning of telephones provided to Gram Panchayats in Gujarat;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the district-wise number of Gram Panchayats provided with telephones and the number out of these are in order/out of order;

(d) the time by which these telephones are likely to be made functional and whether any specific instructions have been issued or proposed to be issued to the Department for improvement in telephone services to the Gram Panchayats in the State; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c). As per Statement attached.

(d) and (e). Efforts are being made to make faulty telephones functional at the earliest. Instructions have been issued to the field Units for taking the following remedial measures:

(i) to enter into Annual maintenance contract with the manufacturers of the equipments.

(ii) to train their staff.

(iii) to periodically check system parameters and to follow prescribed fault reporting procedures.

STATEMENT

Sl. No.	Name of District	No. of G.Ps. with PTs as on 30.6.96	No. of working VPTs in order as on 30.6.96	Total No. of faulty PTs as on 30.6.96
1.	Ahmedabad	614	652	32
2.	Gandhi Nagar	70		
3.	Amreli	519	374	145
4.	Banaskantha	741	731	10
5.	Bharuch	668	601	67
6.	Bhavnagar	717	596	121
7.	Jamnagar	588	504	84
8.	Junagadh	781	637	144
9.	Kheda	899	839	60
10.	Kutch (Bhuj)	519	498	21
11.	Mehsana	994	994	00
12.	Panchmahal	773	663	110
13.	Rajkot	771	643	128
14.	Sabarkantha	670	650	20

Sl. No.	Name of District	No. of G.Ps. with PTs as on 30.6.96	No. of working VPTs in order as on 30.6.96	Total No. of faulty PTs as on 30.6.96
15.	Surendranagar	619	606	13
16.	Surat	684	578	106
17.	Vadodara	719	552	167
18.	Valsad	569	541	80
19.	Dang	52		
20.	Union Territories	19	19	–
		11986	10678	1308

Drug abuse

3317. SHRI PRAMOTHES MUKHERJEE : Will the Minister of WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the attetion of the Government has been drawn to the news-item appearing in the "Statesman" dated June 27, 1996 captioned "Drug abuse cases on the rise in India";

(b) if so, whether the cases of drug abuse are increasing in the country and various authorities have failed to check the drug abuse; and

(c) if so, the corrective measures taken/proposed to be taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF WELFARE (SHRI BALWANT SINGH RAMOOWALIA) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c). In the absence of any nation wide survey with regard to the extent of the drug abuse problem in the country, it is not possible to say that drug abuse is increasing. However, different studies undertaken indicate an increasing trend in drug abuse.

In order to counteract the increasing demand for dependence producing drugs, the Ministry of Welfare is implementing since 1985-86, a comprehensive Scheme for Prohibition and Drug Abuse Prevention. Under this Scheme the Ministry is giving financial assistance to voluntary organisations for setting up of Drug Awareness Counselling Assistance Centres and Drug De-addiction-cum-Rehabilitation Centres, Organising De-addiction Camps and for Awareness Generation Programmes.

As a result of this Ministry's efforts, the number of Centres have increased from 7 in 1985-86 to 363 at present, of which 130 Centres and De-addiction-cum-Rehabilitation Centres and 233 are Counselling Centres.

The Ministry will continue to work for drug demand reduction programmes with greater emphasis on awareness generation, preventive education as well as rehabilitation and social re-integration of the drug addicts.

Use of Coconut Oil

3318. PROF. P.J. KURIEN : Will the Minister of CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have initiated any steps to popularise the use of coconut oil in other States;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the result thereof?

THE MINISTER OF FOOD AND MINISTER OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV) : (a) and (b). Central Government has requested all State Governments/UT Administrations to consider the possibility of procurement and supply of adequate quantity of coconut oil to consumers through fair price shops/cooperative outlets so as to popularise the use of coconut oil as a cooking medium.

(c) The response received from States/UTs so far indicates that the matter is receiving attention. Some States have expressed the view that distribution of coconut oil would not be feasible because of consumer preference to local edible oils as also higher cost taking into account transportation over long distances.